

Message Text

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UNCLAS BEIRUT 14119

USIA FOR IOP/M, IBS, IPS, INA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, PFOR, LE US

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: LEABANESE AMERICAN RELATIONS

SUMMARY: PRESS REPORTS TODAY GENERALLY AGREE THAT LEBANESE-U.S. "CRISIS" BEING WOUND DOWN BY LEBANESE FOREIGN MINISTER. SOME PAPERS CARRY BRIEF WIRE SERVICE ACCOUNTS OF STATE DEPARTMENT COMMENT ON BAGGAGE INSPECTION AT NEW YORK AIRPORT. END SUMMARY

1. CONSERVATIVE AL HAYAT AND ITS ENGLISH-LANGUAGE AFFILIATE, THE DAILY STAR, BOTH REPORT THAT FOREIGN MINISTER TAQLA INDICATED, AFTER MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FRANJIEH, THAT CRISIS BETWEEN LEBANON AND U.S. HAS BEEN RESOLVED. BOTH PAPERS REPORT THAT U.S. CHARGE HOUGHTON "APPARENTLY PRESENTED A DRAFT SOLUTION PREPARED BY WASHINGTON THAT MIGHT BE FACE-SAVING FOR BOTH COUNTRIES" AND THAT INFORMED SOURCES SAID "PRESIDENT FRANJIEH WAS SATISFIED WITH THE PROPOSAL AND DECIDED TO CONSIDER ISSUE CLOSED." SOURCES ALSO QUOTED AS SAYING THAT AMBASSADOR GODLEY, "NOW IN WASHINGTON FOR CONSULTATIONS, WILL CARRY BACK TO BEIRUT LETTER FROM U.S. GOVERNMENT EXPLAINING COMPLEXITIES THAT AROSE WHEN PRESIDENT FRANJIEH VISITED NEW YORK" AND EXTENDING "U.S. GOVERNMENT'S APOLOGY." BOTH PAPERS ALSO CARRY BRIEF FACTUAL ACCOUNT OF STATE DEPARTMENT'S MONDAY COMMENT ON THE MATTER.

2. INDEPENDENT AN NAHAR CARRIES SHORT FACTUAL WIRE SERVICE
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ACCOUNT OF STATE DEPARTMENT COMMENT AS DOES ITS FRENCH LANGUAGE

AFFILIATE, L'ORIENT LE JOUR, BUT LATTER'S HEADLINE DESCRIBES IT AS "DISCOURTEOUS EXPLANATION". AN NAHAR CARTOON SHOWS FORMIN SETTLING PROBLEM WHILE DISPLAYING AMBASSADOR GODLEY'S PHOTO ON HIS DESK.

3. PRO-PLO AL MUHARRIR, REPEATING SUBSTANCE OF PREVIOUS DAY'S REPORT, SAYS AMBASSADOR GODLEY PROBABLY WILL RETURN TO LEBANON WITH LETTER OF APOLOGY FROM PRESIDENT FORD TO PRESIDENT FRANJIEH AND THIS WILL CLOSE THE MATTER.

4. PR-LIBYAN AS SAFIR ATTEMPTS TO KEEP ISSUE ALIVE WITH INFLAMMATORY REPORT CONTAINING RHETORICAL QUESTIONS AND STATING THAT LEBANON IS ASKING FOR TRIAL OR INVESTIGATION OF CHIEF OF THE NEW YORK POLICE AND KENNEDY AIRPORT SECURITY OFFICER.
HOUGHTON

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